

V. *Part of a Letter from the Right Reverend
Father in God ROBERT Lord Bishop of
Corke, and F.R.S. to the Right Honourable
JOHN Earl of EGMONT, F.R.S. concerning
the Remains of an antient Temple in Ireland,
of the same sort as the famous Stonehenge,
and of a Stone-Hatchet of the antient Irish.*

Read Nov. 10.
1743.

— **A**S I never met with any satisfactory Account of these *antient Temples*, I imagined that a short Account of this one, which I met with in the County of *Corke*, in the Parish of *Kilgarriffe*, when I was upon a parochial Visitation, would not be unentertaining to *Your Lordship*; it stands about 10 Miles from *Bandon* to the South-west.

As to the Drawing TAB. II. Fig. 1. the Ground-plan is exact, but the Upright was not taken upon the Place, but drawn from my Description of it, given to Miss *Bushe*, a young Lady who is related to my Wife, and was then in the House with me. It contains the Representation of a very antient Heathen Temple, and the Burial-place of some Person of great Renown, before the erecting of covered Temples was made use of, in this Part of the World, or perhaps in any other Part of the World, except *Judæa*. Which sort of Places of Devotion seem to be the most antient of any that we have Accounts of in History. For *Temples* were originally all open, and thence received their Name, according to *Varro* (*Lib. 6. de ling. Lat.*)

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a *Templando*, which was an antient Word that signified to *see* or *look out*. These Places therefore were called Temples by the Heathens, because they were holy Places, that were marked out by the Augurs for taking their Auguries in; and were therefore left open, that the Priest or Augur, who stood with his Face to the South, according to *Rosinus*, (*Ros. Ant. Lib. III. c. 9.*) or with his Face to the East, according to *Calepine*, (*Cal. Dict. Templum*) might be able to see all around him; his Art of Prediction depending on the Flight of Birds, or some Appearances in the Face of the Sky, which varied their Signification according as they shewed themselves, either on the Right Hand or Left Hand of the Augur. Whether the Disposition of these Stones, in the Plan I have sent you, was designed or accidental, with regard to the Points of the Compass, I cannot say; but it is remarkable, that there are Two Stones, which are fixed directly in the *North* and *West* Points of this Circle; and Two Openings answering to the *East* and *South*: So that it is possible both our Authors may be in the right, and that the Priest sometimes stood with his Face to the East, and sometimes to the South. The middle Stone, which was the Place where the Priest stood, is lower than the rest, not being above Three Feet high, and was always dedicated to some Deity or other; and was consecrated to that Use by the pouring on of Olive-oil: Which Custom was of very antient Date, and seems to have been borrowed from the Practice of the antient Patriarchs, who called these Stones *Bethels*. For when *Jacob* was going from *Beersheba* towards *Padan-Aram* or *Haran*, to seek for a Wife, by Command from his Father
Isaac

Isaac, having laid down to sleep, GOD appeared to him in a Dream; and, when he rose up in the Morning, it is said, that *he took the Stone which he had put for his Pillow, and set it up for a Pillar, and poured Oil upon the Top of it, and he called the Name of that Place BETHEL* (Gen. xxviii. 18. 22.); which Word literally signifies in *English*, GOD's House. Again, when *Jacob* and *Laban* made a Covenant together, *Jacob took a Stone, and set it up for a Pillar*, and probably poured Oil thereon, by way of dedicating it to GOD, as he had done before; for that *Moses* made use of Oil in the Dedication of the Tabernacle, and Altar, and Vessels, &c. is plain from *Lev. viii. 10, &c.* And in this Place, when *Jacob* and *Laban* had finished their Covenant, it is observed, that *Jacob offered up a Sacrifice* (Gen. xxxi. 45. 54.). Again; when *Jacob* afterwards fled from the *Shechemites*, GOD appeared unto him; and in the Place where GOD talked with him, it is said, that *he set up a Pillar, even a Pillar of Stone, and poured a Drink-offering thereon, and he poured Oil thereon. And Jacob called the Name of the Place where GOD spake with him, BETHEL* (Gen. xxxv. 9. 15.). And hence these Stones, which were erected as Marks of these Places having been dedicated to GOD, came to be called *Bethels*; and, by a corrupt Pronunciation of the Word, they were in *Greek* called Βαιβλία (*vide Sanchoniatho*). Which is the Reason why that Stone, which *Rhea* is supposed to have given *Saturn* to swallow instead of a Child, is called Βαιβλος; and not because it was covered with a woollen Garment, which is called Βαίτη in *Greek*, as *Hesychius* pretends. *Hesych. Etym.*

And that this Custom of dedicating single Stones to GOD was not confined to *Judea*, is plain from *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who observes, that before the Art of Carving was invented, the Antients erected unwrought Pillars, and paid their Worship to them as to the Statues of the Gods (*Clem. Alex. Strom. Lib. I.*). *Herodian* also mentions a Pillar, or large Stone, of a black Colour, and a conical Form, at *Antioch* in *Phœnicia*, which was erected in Honour of the Sun (*Herod. Lib. V.*). *Pausanias* also mentions several of these uncarved Pillars in *Bœotia* in *Greece*, and says they were the antient Statues erected to their Gods (*Pausan. in Bœot. & in Acha.*). And that this Custom continued till after the Time of the Prophet *Isaiah*, is plain from his making use of the Expression of erecting a Pillar to GOD, to denote the Worship of God. For, says he, *In that Day shall there be an Altar to the Lord in the midst of the Land of Egypt, and a Pillar at the Border thereof to the Lord. And it shall be for a Sign, and for a Witness, unto the Lord of Hosts in the Land of Egypt* (*Isa. xix. 19, 20.*). And *Arnobius*, who flourished about 330 Years after *Christ*, says, that this Custom continued to his Time; and that, when he was a Heathen, he never met a Stone, which had the Marks of Olive-oil being poured upon it, that he did not look upon as something divine, and offered up his Prayers to it as such (*Arnob. cont. Gent. Lib. I.*).

As to the Custom of erecting this *Bethel* with a certain Number of Stones around it, this also is to be found in the Old Testament. For it is said of *Moses*, after he had been in the Mount with GOD,
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and had returned to the People of *Israel*, that *he rose up early in the Morning, and builded an Altar under the Hill, and Twelve Pillars according to the Twelve Tribes of Israel* (Ex. xxiv. 4.): Which Altar was probably surrounded with these Twelve Pillars, or Twelve large Stones, pitched on an End, and stuck in the Ground; for so the Word מצבה, *Matsebah*, literally signifies; as a proper Designation of the Quantity of Ground, which ought to be looked upon as sanctified by the Altar, and dedicated to God. Of the same kind also we may suppose those Twelve Stones to be, which *Joshua pitched in Gilgal*, after the Children of *Israel* had passed the River *Jordan* (Josh. iv. 20.). The Number of Stones which surrounded these *Bethels*, I suppose therefore were intirely voluntary, at the Discretion of the Persons who dedicated the *Bethel*; and might be fewer or more, either according to the Number of Persons principally concerned in the Dedication, or the Size of the Place, or the Number of Stones which could conveniently be found large enough for that Purpose. The Number of those, of which I have sent you the Draught, are Nine, which surround the *Bethel* at 15 Feet and half Distance from the Centre; the Height of each Stone is about Six Feet above-ground, and their Breadth is from Three Feet and half to near Four Feet, some a little more, and some a little less.

The Stone marked (b), which stands detached from the rest, I take to be a *Matsebah*, or Pillar erected as a Memorial of the Burial-place of some eminent Person; either the Prince or Priest of the Country, or probably both: For antiently the principal Person of each Family, Tribe, or Nation, officiated both as
 Prince

Prince and Priest: And in *Hebrew* the same Word *Cohen* signifies both Prince and Priest. And what confirms this Opinion of its being a sepulchral Monument is, that some of the antient Popish Families hereabouts make use of it as a Burial-place to this Day. The first Account we have of this Custom of erecting Stone Pillars on or near the Burying-place of eminent Persons, is that of *Rachel's*, who dying in Child-birth of her Son *Benjamin*, in the Road between *Bethel* and *Ephrah*, it is said, that *Jacob* set a Pillar upon her Grave (Gen. xxxv. 20.). Of the same kind also may we suppose that *Matsebah* or Pillar to be, which *Absalom* erected for himself during his Life-time, though better wrought, and more ornamental, in the King's Dale; where it is more than probable he designed to have been buried; for it is observed, that he said, *I have no Son to keep my Name in Remembrance, and he called the Pillar after his own Name* (2 Sam. xviii. 18.). Which Custom, of erecting Pillars over the Burial-places of eminent Persons, was not confined to the Land of *Judea*; but was universally practised, as appears from a Passage in *Homer*, where *Minerva* exciting *Telemachus* to go in Quest of *Ulysses*, and supposing the worst that could happen, that is, that he should come to a certain Knowledge of the Death of his Father, she directs him then to raise a Pillar, or Signal, to his Memory; or, as Mr. *Pope* has translated it,

*To the pale Shade Funereal Rites ordain:
Plant the fair Column on the vacant Grave:
A Hero's Honours let the Hero have.*

Hom. Odyf. Lib. I.

And

And hence, in my Opinion, came the Origin of *Obelisks* in *Egypt*, which abounding with the finest Quarries in the World, gave them an Opportunity of pitching Stones of the largest Size over the Burial-places of their eminent Men. And you may observe, that this Stone, of which you have the Plan marked (*b*), is somewhat in the Form of an *Obelisk*; being Ten Feet high, and Two Feet square at the Bottom, diminishing gradually to a Point at the Top.

It is remarkable, that some of these Stones manifestly appear to have been reduced to the Form they are in by Art; particularly that one last-mentioned, as well as the one marked *N. 7.* which is reduced into an hexagonal Form, the inward and the outward Front being similar, with an Angle in the Middle, as represented in the Ground-plan. There is no Appearance of any Mark of a Tool, so that it is probable, that this was done with great Labour, by the Assistance only of sharp Stones; which, before the Invention of Iron, or of that Metal's being common, seems to have been the usual Instrument of Operation in other Circumstances as well as this. For it is observed of *Zipporah*, the Wife of *Moses*, when she was ordered to circumcise her Son, that *she took a sharp Stone, and cut off the Foreskin of her Son* (*Ex. iv. 25.*) And, when *God* orders *Joshua* to circumcise the *Israelites*, he says, *make thee sharp Knives*, as we translate it; but, in the Original it is, *Knives of sharp Stones* (*Josh. v. 2, 3.*).

Herodotus and *Diodorus Siculus* both take notice, that it was the Custom among the ancient *Egyptians*, at the time of embalming the Dead, to cut open the Body with an *Ethiopic* Stone (*Herod. Euterp. Diod. Lib. I. c. 5.*): And *Ovid*, in describing the
Origin

Origin of the Customs of the *Corybantes*, &c. says, that a *Phrygian* Youth with whom the Goddess *Cybele* was in Love, and to whom he proved faithless, for a Punishment * to himself, cut himself all over with a sharp Stone; *Ille etiam saxo corpus laniavit acuto*, &c. (*Ovid. Fast.* 4.).

It is manifest, indeed, that the Use of Iron was found out in *Egypt* before the Time of *Joshua* and *Moses*, both of whom mention it as made use of not only for cutting of soft things †, but also for chizeling of Stones, (*Deut.* xxvii. 5. *Josh.* viii. 31.) But I apprehend it must have been very rare, and that the Art of reducing of Iron to the Hardness and Consistency of Steel, was not yet discovered; because, when *GOD* orders *Joshua* to write the Words of the Law upon Stones, as soon as he had passed over *Jordan*, the way he is ordered to do it is this; to plaster the Stones over with Plaster first, and then to grave in this Plaster the Words of the Law (*Deut.* xxvii. 2, 3.). And yet this is called both by *Moses* and *Joshua*, writing upon the Stones (*Deut.* xxvii. 8.).

It is certain, that the Art of polishing of Jewels, and of cutting one hard Stone with another that was harder, was invented and practised in *Egypt* before the Time of *Moses*; for he speaks of graving the Names of the Children of *Israel* in Two Onyx-stones, which, being harder than Iron, even than Steel, are not to be wrought upon therewith; but must be cut by some Stone which is harder than themselves.

* Of the Antiquity of this Practice, see *Lev.* xix. 28.

† *Joseph*, when he was sent for by *Pharaoh*, shaved himself, *Gen.* xli. 14.

Wherefore *Moses* says, *with the Work of an Engraver in Stone, like the Engravings of a Signet, shalt thou grave the two Stones* (Ex. xxviii. 9. 11.). And therefore the Prophet *Jeremiah* mentions a *Pen of Iron*, as made use of for Engraving (*Jer.* xvii. 1.).

But the Use of Iron does by no means seem to have been found out in these Western Parts of the World till much later; and therefore it is probable, that the Inhabitants of these Countries made use of Stones, which were the original Instruments used in cutting both for domestic and military Service, in all Countries of the known World; as appears of late Years from the Practice of the *Americans*. And it is also manifest, from the many Instruments of War, that are made of Stone, which have been dug up in these Western Parts of *Europe*, that the Use of Iron was not very common in these Parts, till of late Years. *Montfaucon*, in the IVth and Vth Tome of his *Antiquities*, gives us an Account of several Tombs being opened near *Paris*, and in other Places; wherein the hard and destructive Part of the Weapons found therein consisted of Stone. He particularly gives us the Cut of a Stone Hatchet in his own Possession, which was made of Touchstone, in the 4th Tome of his Supplement, p. 30. But as I have at present in my Possession a much more complete one, made of the same kind of Stone, I have sent you the Draught of it done with Exactness, by a Scale of a quarter of an Inch to an Inch, TAB. II. Fig. 2. and you will see, that it is plainly made for doing Execution both ways; and therefore answers the Description given by *Montfaucon* of the *Amazonian* Hatchet, or the *Sagaris* of *Xenophon* (*vide Montf.* Tom. IV. p. 69.). The Handle

is made of Yew, and the Stone is not inferted into the Handle at Right Angles, but makes an acute Angle below towards the Hand ; the Use of which appears at first Sight. I am,

My LORD,

Your most obedient,

Humble Servant,

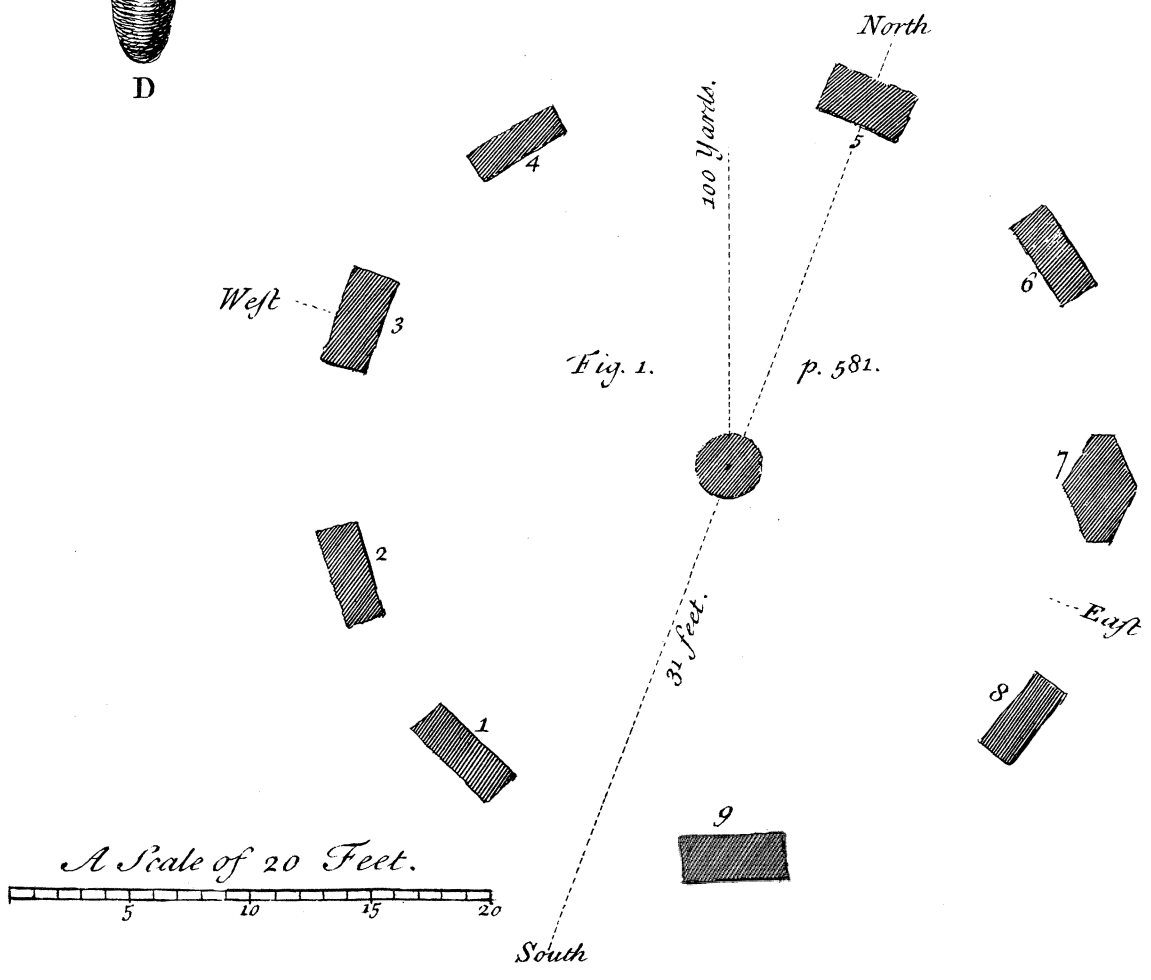
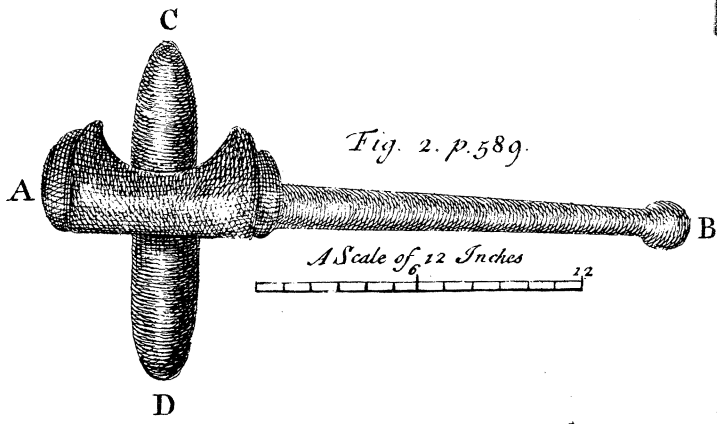
ROBERT CORKE.

VI. *A Letter from the Revd Mr. Griffith Hughes, Minister of St. Lucy's Parish in Barbadoes, to Martin Folkes, Esq; Pr. R. S. concerning a Zoophyton, somewhat resembling the Flower of the Marigold.*

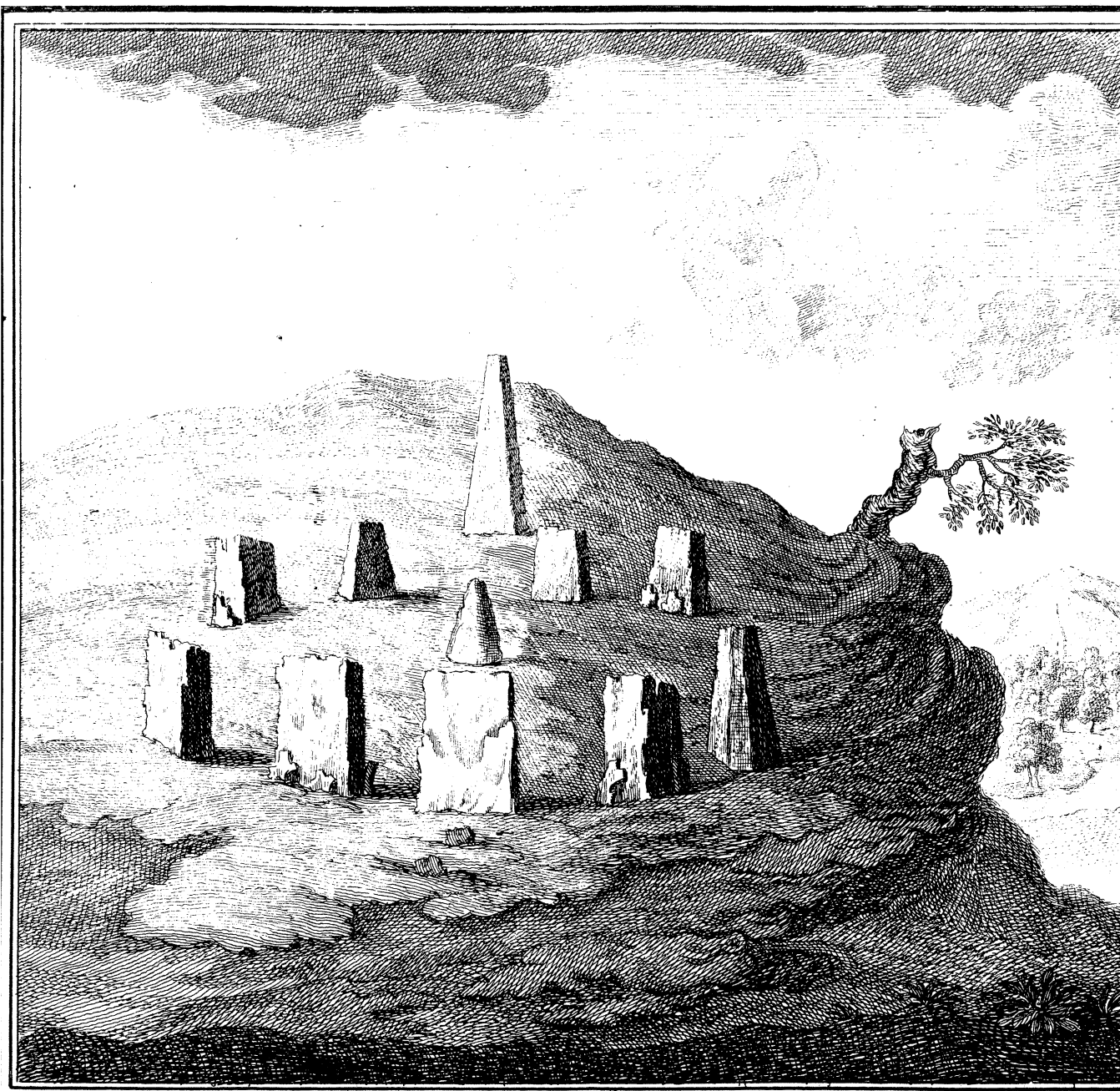
S I R,

*Read Nov.
10. 1743.*

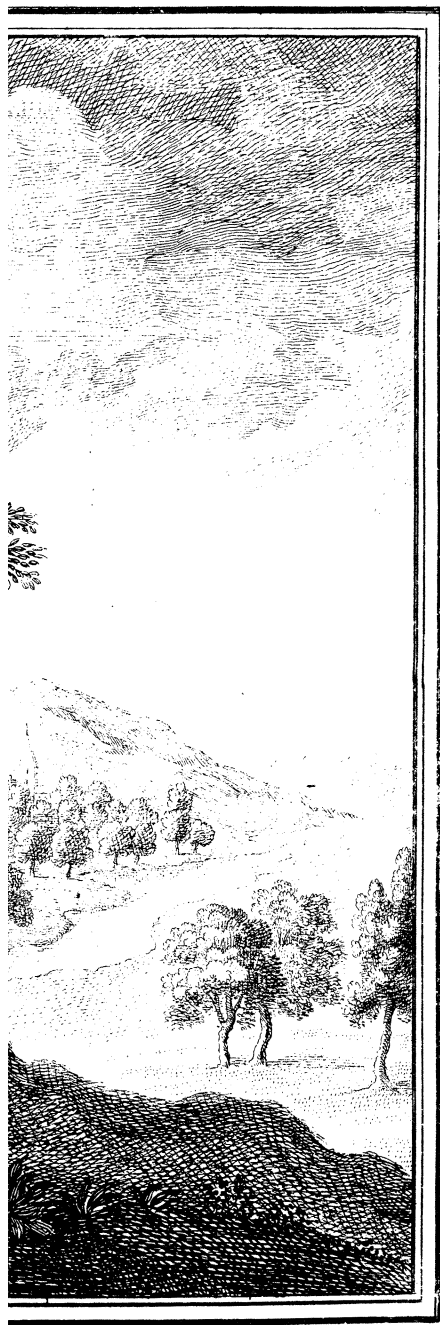
HOWever surprising the Description of a Flower, which I believe is in Reality an Animal, may appear; yet we cannot, without the highest Arrogance, presume to prescribe Limits to the Power of the ALMIGHTY, who, for wise Ends, sometimes hides his Works in such Darkness, as to be concealed from the most exalted human Knowledge. There are no Ages past, in which fresh and almost numberless Instances of his wonderful Works have not discovered themselves. And what, in ours, seems most inexplicable, will, possibly, appear to Futurity, no more than the natural



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